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ASCS Background Information

NATIONAL SECURITY EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

BI No. 4

United States
Department of
Agriculture
Agricultural
Stabilization and
Conservation
Service

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Program Purpose

During national security emergencies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has an important role in the U.S. Government's effort to be prepared for wartime conditions. During these times of emergency, USDA would direct its efforts toward the conservation of and equitable distribution of the Nation's food supply and the preservation of agricultural resources.

Delegation to ASCS

The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated many of the duties involving agricultural production, food processing, storage and wholesale distribution during national security emergencies to the Administrator of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS). ASCS is a nationwide organization within USDA having over 2,800 offices in the 50 States and Puerto Rico. Within ASCS, the Emergency Operations and Livestock Programs Division, reporting to the Deputy Administrator, State and County Operations, coordinates the national security emergency program.

ASCS's National Security Emergency Duties

During a national emergency, ASCS will:

1. Administer agricultural production programs, including controls on the use of feed and seed, domestic mixing and distribution of fertilizer, distribution of farm equipment, and the storage and distribution of grain.
2. Administer control measures on food processing, storage, and wholesale distribution.
3. Analyze the capabilities of agriculture, the food industry, and support industries to supply food and food requirements.
4. Assess the effects of attack on these food production, processing, distribution, and supporting industries.
5. Provide guidance and information to the agricultural and food industries and to State governments.
6. Help agriculture, the food industry, and agribusinesses to obtain materials, labor, energy, supplies, and services that will enable them to continue to produce, process, and store food.
7. Assist these food, agricultural, and agribusinesses to obtain materials to repair and rehabilitate their facilities.

Commodity
Credit
Corporation

The Commodity Credit Corporation is a U.S. Government corporation that funds programs administered by ASCS, for the purpose of stabilizing, supporting, and protecting farm income and prices and to assist in maintaining adequate supplies of agricultural commodities. During a national security emergency, the assets of the Corporation may be used to:

1. Procure agricultural commodities to provide emergency food supplies and manage commodity inventories to assure that they are available.
2. Make reimbursable disbursements to the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) for emergency production loans, when mail services, activities of FmHA's Finance Office, or the Disbursing Office of the U.S. Treasury are disrupted.
3. Guarantee or make emergency loans to firms to continue processing, storage, and wholesale distribution of food and the distribution and use of feed and seed.
4. Guarantee or make emergency loans to continue the mixing and distribution of fertilizer, the distribution of farm equipment, and other agricultural supplies.
5. Guarantee payment to firms authorized by USDA to provide a commodity under USDA jurisdiction, or a related service.

Food and
Agricultural
Council

USDA national security emergency programs, under direction from USDA national headquarters, are administered by a Food and Agricultural Council, Emergency Programs, in each State, the Caribbean Area, and every agricultural county. The ASCS State and County Executive Directors serve as chairpersons for these emergency programs.